MODULE 4:

ASSESSMENT FOR INDIVIDUALIZATION

Focus of this session

- Assessment to inform instruction

- Not assessment to identify possible special needs

- Not assessment for program evaluation

Different assessment purposes require different methods/measures

Major purposes:
- screening
- diagnosis
- progress monitoring
- program evaluation

Measures vary by:
- administration conditions
- reference group or standard
- technical characteristics and score type

Assessment is important for individualizing goals and experiences for *ALL* children.

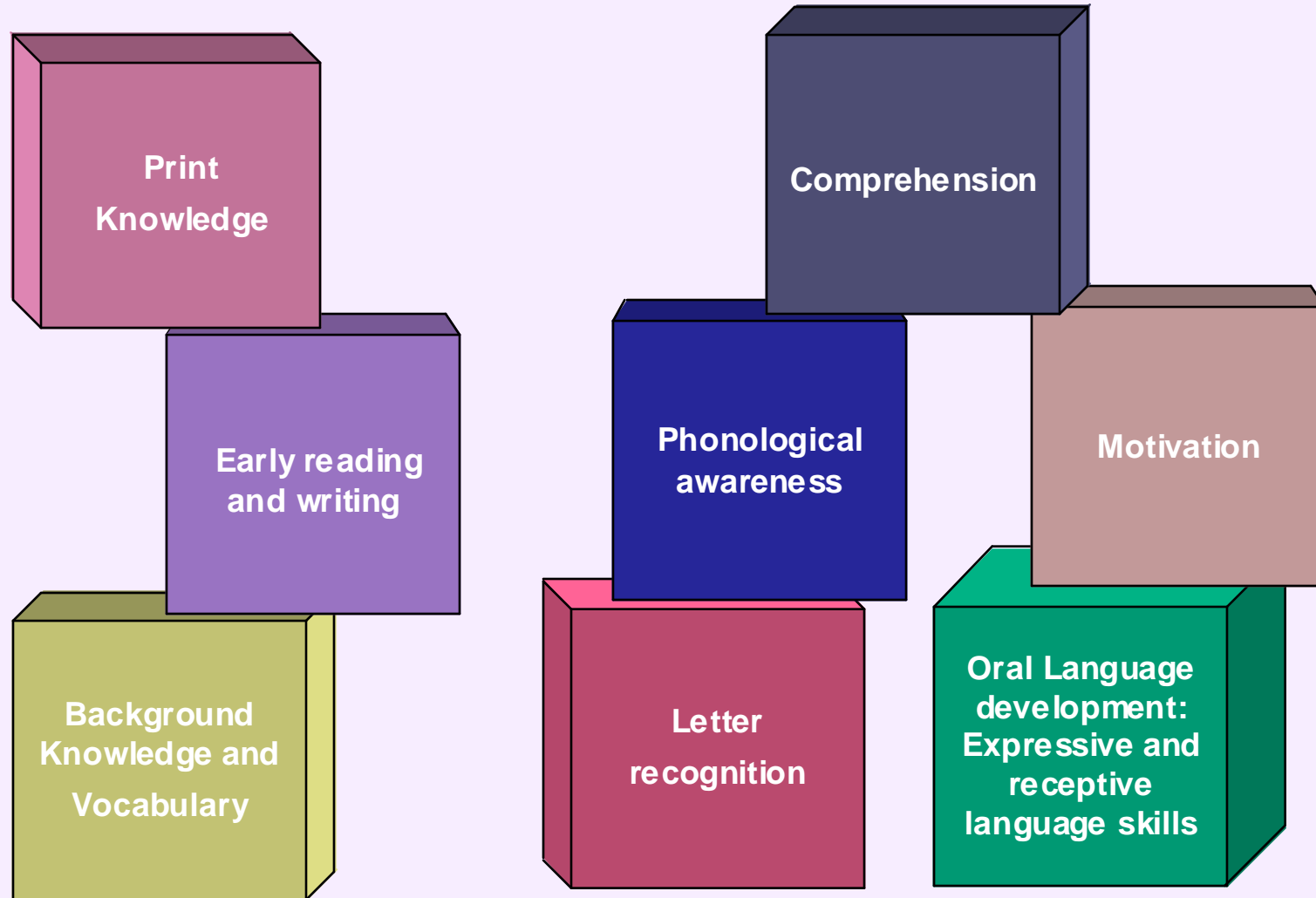# Assessment and teaching are inseparable.

Assessment should:

- Provide information on what child knows and does not know

- Be on-going and regular, throughout the school year

- Provide consistency in the types of information gathered

- Use multiple sources of information

- Avoid cultural bias

Important Language and Literacy Domains to Assess

Print Knowledge

Comprehension

Early reading and writing

Phonological awareness

Motivation

Background Knowledge and Vocabulary

Letter recognition

Oral Language development: Expressive and receptive language skills

Sources of Child Assessment Information

- Parent / family observations and insights
- Child's work
- Teacher anecdotal records
- Performance assessments
- Norm-referenced tests

8

Parent report of child's literacy skills at age 3 and 4 years is predictive of the child's language and literacy performance in kindergarten and first grade (Dickinson & DeTemple, 1998)

Examples of Parent/Family Observations and Insights

- Does child pretend to read alone?

- Does child pretend to read to others?

- Does child have a favorite book?

- Has child memorized any books?

- Does child pretend to write?

10

Child's Work

- Name-writing attempts

- Writing sample (such as a journal)

- Drawings, paintings, or other art samples

- Drawings with dictated stories

- Audiotapes of pretend storybook readings or story retelling

- Child's word box or word collection

Teacher Anecdotal Records

"You can observe a lot by watching" – Yogi Berra

Example of Teacher Anecdotal Record

"Sammy learned a new word ("frost") during yesterday's group time, and he used it today when dictating a story to the assistant teacher about his drawing made during free choice time."

13

Examples of Performance Assessments Functions of Print (FPT)
(Weiss and Hagan, 1988)

- Show children 10 different types of print (menu, phonebook, dictionary) 3 objects at a time.

- Ask: "Show me the _____."
- Ask: "Why do people read _____?"

The Narrative Comprehension Assessment (NCA)
(Paris & Paris, 2003)

- Child is asked to look through storybook and "read" story.

- Child retells story with book closed.

- Child and adult go through the book. Adult asks 5 literal and 5 inferential questions about story structure (i.e., characters, setting).

15

MODULE 4:

Example of Norm-Referenced Test Items

From Test of Early Reading Ability 3
(Reid, Hresko, & Hammill, 2001)

- Which letter is this?

- Point to the picture that starts with the letter *c.*

- Point to the first letter in the word *bike.*

- Which one (picture) is Jell-O?

English Language Learners
Sequence of Development

Consider whether ability in English limits evidence of child progress AND consider progress in learning English. Many children go through a **sequence** like the following:

only uses home language

understands but does not speak in English

telegraphic and formulaic English utterances

full use of English, but not on demand in tests

full use of English anytime anywhere
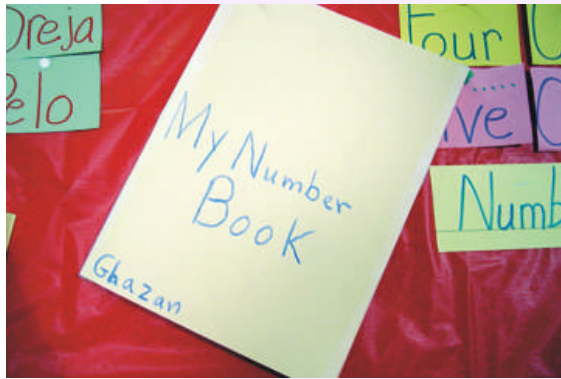
Circles
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17

Assessment Consideration for English Language Learners

- Understand proficiency level in first language

- Allow more time

- Be alert to different reasoning strategies

Tips on Organizing Assessment Information

- A portfolio to keep all materials in one location
- Anecdotal reports on easy-to-use forms
- Put date and child's name on each item
- Confer with individual children about contributions to their portfolio
- Maintain a master list indicating when an item has been added to each child's portfolio

When Determining Individual Objectives:

- Consider assessment information in relation to age- and culturally-appropriate language and literacy benchmarks

- Develop challenging yet achievable objectives

- Review individual objectives frequently

When Determining Individual Objectives:

- Build on the child's existing strengths and interests

- Develop in collaboration with the parent/caregiver

- For children with Individualized Education Program (IEP), develop objectives within IEP framework

Approaches to Individualizing

- Curriculum modifications, including embedded learning opportunities

- Child-focused instructional strategies

Examples of Curriculum Modifications:

- Target letter recognition by using blocks in the block area

- If child never uses the book area during free choice time, introduce child to area by having the child's small group meet in the book corner

- Use card or board games to enhance phonological awareness

Example of Child-focused Strategy

Teach a child who is making the transition to kindergarten to write his or her name using direct instruction or graduated guidance

4

Communicating With Parents

- Jointly review **individualized goals** for the child

- Emphasize the **child's strengths** and **progress**

- Teachers initiate **regular communication** with parents

Example of Involving Parent in Assessment

Encourage and provide supports for parent and child to develop literacy items that become a part of the classroom (for example, a family album)

Links to Other Even Start Components

- **Adult Education**: Parents keep a daily journal on parent-child storybook reading experiences at home. (What read? How selected? How did child respond to book?)

- **Parent-Child Interaction**: Parents prepare daily reflections on child's behaviors and suggestions for tailoring activities to child's interests.

- **Home Visits**: Second language (e.g., Spanish speaking) families talk about what it means for child to learn English at program.

Program Implications

- **Professional development** on key concepts and practices related to assessments

- **Staffing arrangements** that provide time for assessments and planning, including team meetings

Program Implications

- **Consultants with expertise** on
    1. **English language learners,**
    2. **children with special needs, and**
    3. **uses of assessment instruments, including norm-referenced tests.**

- **Teacher time** for individualized communication with parents